

3rd Annual



Introduction

The Best Practices Program is sponsored by Illinois Attorney General Lisa Madigan's Select Committee on Recreation Opportunities for People with Disabilities. The goal of the program is to promote recreational opportunities for people with disabilities by recognizing outstanding efforts made each year in the State of Illinois.

Description

Best Practices Awards are given in recognition of outstanding efforts to promote full participation by people with disabilities in recreation programs and events. Awards categories recognize agencies large and small, public and private, for-profit and not-for-profit. They can be given in recognition of a program – a multiple day activity such as one that meets each week for a number of weeks -- as well as for a single event. (Although considered a one-time occurrence, events, such as festivals and fairs, may last for several days). The program must have taken place during the calendar year 2005.

Qualifications

To qualify for a Best Practices Award, a program or event must meet five of the following qualifications:

- It must utilize unique techniques or approaches or traditional techniques or approaches in new ways.
- It must demonstrate a partnership or collaboration with one or more organizations.
- It must meet its stated goals or objectives.
- It must promote positive awareness of people with disabilities.
- It must promote inclusion of people of all abilities.
- It must promote participation of people with and without disabilities in the program or event.
- It must demonstrate a positive influence on the people it serves.
- It must promote a healthy leisure lifestyle.
- It must exceed the agency's expectations of excellence.

Submission Requirements

Each nominee must submit a portfolio that contains information regarding the reasons the nominated program or event meets the qualifications for the Best Practices Award and setting forth the manner in which the program or event meets each of the Award Criteria. The portfolio cannot be larger than 8 ½" x 11" and may not exceed 20 pages. It must be double spaced and placed in a flat binder. No three-ring binders. The original and five copies must be submitted.

Award Criteria

The portfolio must deal with each of the award criteria and must be arranged in the following order:

- Written application. (5 points)
- The reasons for initiating the program or event. (10 points)
- The goals and objectives of the program or event. (10 points)
- The unique and outstanding features of the program or event. (25 points)
- The manner in which volunteers and community resources were utilized. (10 points)
- Copies of the program budget, expenditures and revenues (if any) as well as the cost per participant of the entire program or event. (10 points)
- The number of participants and spectators and the size of the target group for that program or event. (5 points)

Award Criteria *(continued)*

- The effectiveness of the program or event in meeting its stated goals and objectives. (15 points)
- The way in which people with disabilities and people without disabilities interacted with each other during the program or event. (10 points)
- The steps taken towards compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act. (10 points)
- The reasons why this program or event deserves to be a recipient of a Best Practices Award. (15 points)
- Letters of support (up to three). (5 points)
- The materials used to promote and publicize the program or event, including flyers, brochures and news clippings (no videos). (10 points)
- Photographs (maximum of 5) of the program or event, with a brief description of the photos on a separate sheet of paper (no substitutes). (10 points)

Maximum Points = 150

Award Categories

There are eight award categories, four for local governments and four for private entities:

1. Local government (park districts, municipalities, school districts, townships, counties, and local government cooperative entities such as special recreation associations)
 - A. Single unit of local government
 1. Budgets up to \$1,000,000
 2. Budgets over \$1,000,000
 - B. Cooperative effort by two or more units of local government
 1. Budgets up to \$1,000,000
 2. Budgets over \$1,000,000
2. Private for-profit
 - A. Budgets up to \$2,000,000
 - B. Budgets over \$2,000,000
3. Private not for-profit
 - A. Budgets up to \$250,000
 - B. Budgets over \$250,000

Review Panel

A panel to be appointed by the Illinois Associations of Park Districts (IAPD) shall review the entries for the Best Practices Awards. The panel shall be chaired by the Attorney General or her designee and include one representative of a park district, one representative of a special recreation association, one representative from the National Center on Physical Activity and Disability (NCPAD), one representative of a not-for-profit agency, one representative of a for-profit firm, and two additional persons with disabilities.

Deadline

The application form and portfolios must be postmarked on or before March 1, 2006. Portfolios postmarked after March 1, 2006 will not be accepted. Portfolios will be returned to the entrants at the conclusion of judging.

Publicity

Best Practices Awards recipients will be recognized at a ceremony in the spring of 2006 sponsored by the Illinois Attorney General's Office. The Best Practices Awards program will be publicized on the websites of the Illinois Attorney General, Recreation Access Illinois, NCPAD and IAPD. Award recipients will have the opportunity to submit a detailed document, describing their award winning program or event that will be featured on the NCPAD "Community Spotlight" section, which highlights successful recreation programs for people with disabilities.